

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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When the "Babe" Came To Rutland
October 1919

HEY, LOOK
BABE RUTH The Home
Run King
AND THE
BOSTON RED SOX
WILL PLAY THE
RUTLAND BASE BALL TEAM
AT THE FAIR GROUNDS
RUTLAND, VT.
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

VERMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Local poster advertising the visit of Babe Ruth to Rutland.

About the Author



Jacob Sherman has been a reference and technical services librarian at the Rutland Free Library since 1972. He has an undergraduate degree in English Literature from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master's degree in Library Science from the State University of New York at Albany. Prior to entering the library field, he spent several years as a journalist, working from 1965 to 1966 for the *Philadelphia Tribune* and from 1967 to 1970 for the *Albany Times-Union* where he produced feature stories and arts coverage.

During the summers of 1970 and 1971 he was a public relations writer for the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. After arriving in Vermont, Jake, along with Michael Brown and Tom Wylie, was a co-founder of *The Rutland Voice*, an alternative newspaper which published from 1973 to 1975. During this period he also became an "End-to-End" on the Long Trail. In March of 1982 he contributed to the *Sunday Rutland Herald* a feature piece on the Green Mountain Parkway battle of the 1930s. In 1986, for the centennial of the founding of the Rutland Free Library, he authored a series of essays on the library's history entitled *Rutland Free Library, 1886-1986: 100 Years of Service*. He also contributed a piece to the *Herald* in September 1993, envisioning what Rutland would be like in the year 2025.

Jake is a past board chairman of the Rutland Historical Society and Chairman of the Publications Committee. He currently serves the organization as secretary. He also serves as secretary of the Killington Section of the Green Mountain Club. He is interested in local history and in preserving older structures in the city, many of which are being lost. He has been particularly active in the struggle to maintain the integrity of the South Main Street historic district. He and his wife Madeline, a librarian and social studies teacher at Proctor High School, have two daughters, Deborah and Rebecca.

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When the “Babe” Came to Rutland October 1919

By Jacob R. Sherman

The date was 1 October 1919, a Wednesday, and to say that anticipation was building was to put it mildly. Nothing like it had ever happened before. Babe Ruth was coming to Rutland. The morning's *Herald* had brought an announcement made the previous evening by Harry C. Shedd, manager of the Rutland professional baseball team, that a contract had been signed to bring the young home run king and his Boston Red Sox to Rutland to play the local team. The game would take place four days hence on Sunday afternoon at the Rutland fairgrounds. The usual venue of St. Peter's field was judged too small to accommodate a slugger of Ruth's prowess. Shedd would be bringing to Rutland “what is probably the greatest baseball attraction ever brought into Vermont,” crowed the *Herald*.

However, it wasn't as if the Babe's appearance were the only thing going on in town. Only two days afterward, on 7 October, the Fifth New York Princess Theatre Company would be in Rutland to present “Oh, Lady! Lady!!,” a new musical comedy with book and lyrics by Guy Boston and P.G. Wodehouse and music by Jerome Kern. The company would be at The Playhouse (today's Paramount Theater) for one performance only. Tickets ranging from fifty cents to \$2.00 would go on sale on Saturday morning. There were different plays and musicals at The Playhouse several times a week as traveling theatrical companies brought their wares to the leading towns of New England. Moreover, at the Grand Theatre on West Street and the Strand Theater on Wales Street there were the latest films from Hollywood featuring such stars as Mack Sennett and Mrs. Charlie Chaplin (Mildred Harris) and live vaudeville as well. All of this, however, was run-of-the-mill fare compared to the musical event scheduled for The Playhouse on Monday night when a figure, as renowned in his field as Babe Ruth was in his, would take the stage. The “world's greatest violinist,” Fritz Kreisler, would be in Rutland that evening and there was a rush for seats, the best in the house going for \$2.00. The *Herald* announced that seats would go on sale the following day at the store of N.M. Bradley, who sold the latest RCA Victrola record playing machines a few doors down from The Playhouse at 24 Center Street. Telephone orders would not be accepted except from outside the city.

These activities in Rutland were taking place against a background of much going on in the nation and the world. Each day's headlines brought new details about the physical condition of President Woodrow Wilson, who two weeks previously, in the waning years of his second term, had been taken seriously ill. On 8 October it was announced that his personal physician had let him sit up in bed for part of the day but was seriously discouraging any attempt to perform official business. In Gary, Indiana, meanwhile, 1600 federal troops under Major

General Leonard Wood had just established “military control” in the Chicago steel strike district, seizing a quantity of “radical literature” and breaking up a meeting of strike sympathizers in one of the city’s parks. Martial law had been declared in Gary and “red leaders” were blamed by General Wood for the disturbances. In far away London, meanwhile, Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and other government leaders were rallying behind the proposed League of Nations while on the home front a coalition of mainly Republican senators was doing everything possible to keep the United States out of it. But what mainly occupied the country the first ten days of October was the seesaw World Series battle between the Chicago White Sox and the Cincinnati Reds. Players such as Chicago outfielder “Shoeless” Joe Jackson had captivated the public imagination and the detailed accounts of the games on the front pages of the *Herald* and other papers won the widest readership. Soon however, the glow of victory turned to sordid revelations of scandal when it was disclosed that White Sox players, whom owner Charlie Comiskey paid the then respectable sum of \$6,000 per year, had accepted \$20,000 each from New York gamblers to throw games. The guilty players, among them, “Shoeless Joe,” were subsequently banned from the game for life and the infamous “Black Sox” left a permanent stain on the American pastime. When a tearful 10-year-old paperboy was said to have demanded of his idol, “Say it ain’t so, Joe, say it ain’t so,” Shoeless Joe was forced to admit: “It’s so, kid!”

In Rutland, the Series was also followed with avid interest. One local connection was Cincinnati pitcher Ray Fisher, who had starred at Middlebury College. The *Herald* noted his fine performance in game three. Meanwhile, city businessman Louis E. Howley had come up with the idea of a World Series scoreboard on Center Street. The success of this venture was largely due to Harvey R. Kingsley who permitted the use of his office for it to be displayed, while William H. Dunn, Hugh Webb, John E. Barrett, George E. Morse and Carlton O. Wilson were credited with seeing to the board’s efficient operation. Among those contributing funds to the project were Walter R. Kinsman and Fred Field. The expenses of the venture came to \$195.00 but this was more than offset by collections of \$243.58 leaving \$48.58 to be deposited in the Clement National Bank in an account labeled World Series Funds.

The excitement the Series was generating paled, however, in comparison to that being produced by the impending appearance of Babe Ruth and the Red Sox. While it is true that in 1919 it was not uncommon for professional teams to play exhibition games in Rutland, it must be remembered that the Red Sox of that era were not the angst and heartache-inducing lot that have raised and dashed the hopes of succeeding generations. They were the best team in baseball. It is sometimes thought that the Sox’ triumph in the 1918 World Series was the only time they won the championship when actually it was the last time they won it. In fact, of the first 15 World Series ever played, the Red Sox had won five. In the past seven years they had played in four World Series and won them all. The previous year they had vanquished the Cubs in six games, the star of the series being a

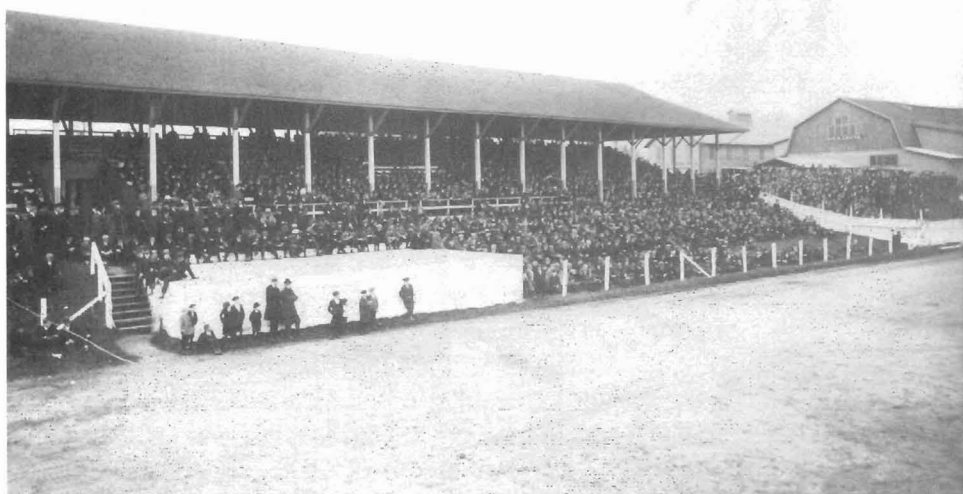
strong-armed young Sox pitcher named...Babe Ruth. Yes, in those years the Babe was not only a hitter, but was considered the best left-handed pitcher in baseball. From 1915 through 1918 he had compiled an awesome record: 18-8 in 1915, 23-12 in 1916, 24-13 in 1917 and 13-7 in 1918. In 1917 he had pitched 38 games completing 35 of them. Starting in game one of the 1918 series, he had pitched virtually flawlessly going the full nine innings en route to a 6-0 shutout. A few days later in game four, he again mastered his opponents hurling 7 1/3 innings of shutout ball. Together with his pitching in the 1916 series, the two outings gave the Babe 29 2/3 consecutive innings of scoreless pitching in World Series competition, a record which lasted until 1961! While it was true that 1919 had been an off year for the Sox, they still had the aura of champions. To Rutlanders of that time the notion that such a team would never again win a World Series title in their century was unthinkable.

Nor was the Babe Ruth who came to Rutland that Sunday the familiar figure from later years whose beefy frame gave too much evidence of overindulgent living. This was a young Babe, still only 24 but consisting of over six feet and 225 pounds of batting power and already beginning to set new standards as a long ball hitter. Home runs, it must be remembered, were a rarity in this "dead ball era." The previous season the entire Red Sox team had clouted only 15 four-baggers, 11 of them coming from the bat of Ruth, and while the team total may seem paltry, four other American League teams had even fewer. In 1919, however, the Babe had exploded for 29 homers, an unheard of number. The entire team had hit only 33. So, to Rutlanders of that time the young slugger from Baltimore was a hitter of titanic and legendary proportions, and they were anxious to see if he could plant one over the fence at the fairgrounds, a feat that in 25 years followers of the Rutland team had never seen accomplished. Hopefully, no one that day knew too much about the future, for in less than three months, still shy of his 25th birthday, the Babe would be sold to the Yankees for \$125,000 straight cash. In his obsession with raising money to prop up his faltering career as a theatrical producer, Red Sox owner Harry Frazee had made the most ill conceived deal in baseball history. Babe and the Yankees went on to spawn a dynasty while the Sox floundered for decades and, according to some, never recovered, thus giving rise to endless debates about "the curse of the Bambino."

The game was naturally the source of a lot of civic pride. It was well known that the Sox were in demand all around the country for exhibition games. In fact, on this date they had originally planned to be in Providence, Rhode Island. However, Manager Shedd's guarantee to the visitors of \$1500 for the contest had evidently been enough to persuade them to travel to Vermont. To get some perspective on this amount, Rutland's superintendent of schools earned \$2,500 in 1919 while the fire chief, A.J. Courcelle, earned \$1,155.70. Just about all teachers, firemen and police officers in the city earned less than \$1,000 annually. Babe Ruth himself in the year 1917 was paid only \$5,000 for the season. Would Shedd and his backers be able to recoup their investment? With all grandstand seats going for

25 cents each, parking for 50 cents, and scorecards for \$1.10, it was going to be close. Approximately 10 per cent of these revenues had to be earmarked for the "war tax."

Sunday afternoon rolled around at last and for the 3,000 who crowded into the fairgrounds coming from "all parts of Vermont and New York State" the Babe did not disappoint. George Herman Ruth came to the plate five times and had two smashing hits. One was a double, while the other, which came in the eighth inning, was a towering home run which was "one of the highest hit balls ever made in the city" and soared so far into right field that "the Rutland outfielder lost sight of it." It landed two feet from the right field fence, an "almost incredible" distance to hit the ball. Several clouts by the Bambino during batting practice had actually cleared the left center and center field fences much to the amazement of the old-timers. Another side of the Babe was witnessed by the locals when, in his initial at bat in the first inning, he whiffed in a mighty fashion.

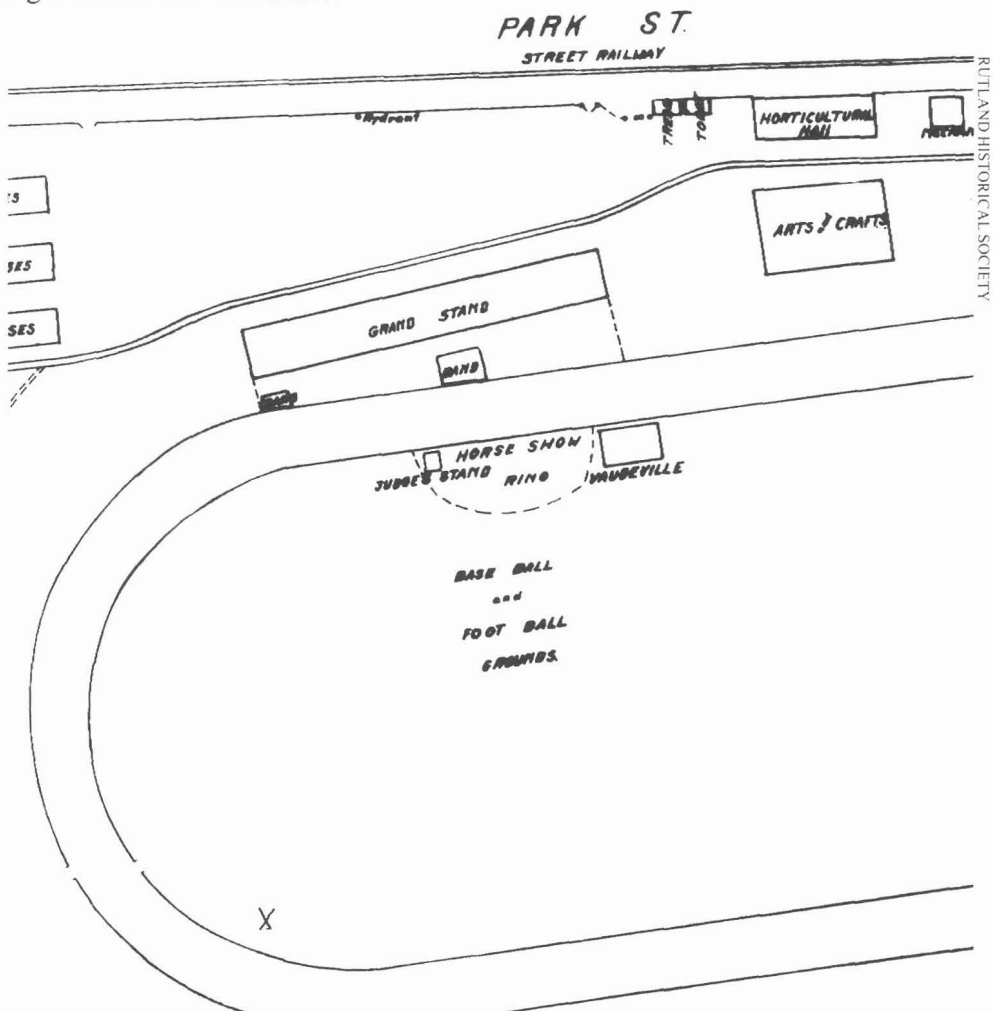


RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Although this view of the crowded grandstand was not photographed on the day of the big game, it well represents the interest of Rutland in good baseball.

Exhibition games of this period were not one-sided routs or entertainment vehicles in the tradition of the Harlem Globetrotters. The Rutland league team [it doesn't appear to have had a name at this point] consisted of a mixture of major league players as well as talented area amateurs who were out there to win. On the mound that day for the Rutlanders was Dick Rudolph, regularly of the Boston Braves, and he "twirled an excellent game," admittedly allowing ten hits but keeping the score tied through eight innings. Rudolph's efforts seem to have been undone in part by miscues in the outfield, the most costly of these being a ball dropped by the left fielder John Barrett in the eighth. One wonders about the

terrain in the outfield when reading that “it was impossible to tell from some parts of the grounds whether Barrett dropped or caught the ball as he was out of sight over an embankment.” The play was ruled an error, however, and the batter was safe at third. Soon afterward the Babe “came across with the kind of wallop the fans had been clamoring for....and he was greeted with tremendous applause.” Other Red Sox members made some stellar plays, particularly in the field. First baseman “Stuffy” McInnis made a nice stop of a hard hit ball by Rutland’s George Walsh, while second baseman Bobby Roth was able to come up with a one-handed grab of a fly ball to shallow center. That the Rutland team ultimately succumbed to such talented visitors by a margin of 6-2 was evidently not a cause of much distress. A full account of the game is to be found in the *Herald* of Monday, 6 October, not on the front page but well inside in the “News of the City” section right next to the “Personals.”



This 1908 map of the grounds of the Rutland County Agricultural Society shows where the Babe Ruth homerun went (“X” marks the spot).

It is hard to believe today, when one must journey to Burlington or Pittsfield, Massachusetts, to see even minor league teams, that only a few days later another major league team arrived in Rutland for an exhibition game against the locals. This was the New York Giants, a team that had finished second in the National League that year and had been in contention for the pennant until the final few weeks of the season. The Giant lineup facing Rutland was to consist of all first-stringers, the team's management made clear, and the club's leading pitcher, 25-game winner Jess Barnes, would be on the mound.

The game which was held on Thursday afternoon at St. Peter's Field, was attended "by the smallest crowd that has attended a game this year." No estimate was made of its size. Evidently after seeing Ruth and the Red Sox a few days previously, local fans found even the Giants a letdown. It was a workday and many were no doubt more interested in the deciding game of the World Series, which was being played that afternoon. Unfortunately, as described by the *Herald*, those not present missed one of the best-played and hardest fought games ever to take place in Rutland. When it was over the Giants had defeated the Rutland team 1-0 in ten innings but the visitors had been "forced to exert all they had to come through victorious." The contest could have easily gone to the Rutlanders were it not for a sensational catch in the last of the eighth by Giant centerfielder Benny Kauff which robbed local outfielder George Walsh of a triple. Then in the top of the tenth Giants pitcher Barnes did triple, scoring on a subsequent batter's slow roller to the infield. A snappier throw might well have caught the not overly speedy pitcher at the plate, it was noted, but thus was the margin of victory provided. Woodward of the St. Louis Cardinals was on the hill for Rutland, losing the heartbreaker despite an excellent effort. Rutland's second baseman, Richy Terenzini had a good day, too, making a quick-reacting double play in the seventh and garnering one of the club's three hits. "Larry" Gardner, third baseman for the Cleveland Indians, played shortstop for Rutland gathering in everything hit his way. Some locals remembered Gardner from the last time he played in Rutland in 1906 in the old Northern League. He was accorded an ovation each time he stepped to the plate. Fans were pleased by the way National League umpire William Klem conducted the game with nary a disputed call. They also appreciated the way he announced the batters as they came to the plate and kept the crowd abreast of the inning-by-inning score coming from Chicago. When the long afternoon was over, the weary and tested Giants left town for St. Johnsbury and Windsor where they were also slated to play.

On Tuesday, 7 October, under "News of the City," a short review of the film "Home" at the Grand Theatre starring Mildred Harris (Mrs. Charlie Chaplin) appeared. The picture, the story of a small town plumber's daughter who discovers after a stay with a wealthy girl friend that wealth and society can have a duplicitous, dark side, was accompanied by a newsreel showing General Pershing leading his division down Fifth Avenue in New York, a Mack Sennett comedy short, as well as a live vaudeville program. That night at The Playhouse the



TODAY and TOMORROW



Mrs. Charlie Chaplin

(MILDRED HARRIS)

— in —

“HOME”

The Story of Every Girl.

How eagerly parents and lover awaited her return from boarding school! And when she came—she was ashamed of her home.

Home—That blessed place—where sham and pretense are cast aside. She had a real home but did not realize it.

She thought she was winning a social lion, but found he was a coyote.

If home ties are losing their hold on your boy or girl let them see “Home.”

PATHE NEWS

Showing Gen. Pershing leading the 1st Division down 5th ave., New York city.

Vaudeville

Paramount-Mack Sennett Comedy.

MAT. 2.30. 5—10c. EVE. 6.30—8.30. 10—15c.

Rutland Herald ad for “Home” at the Grand Theatre.



The Grand Theatre at the corner of West and Edson Streets.

performance of “Oh, Lady! Lady!!!” took place. The following morning it was praised for its “beautiful gowns, catchy music, and excellent dancing.” The large audience appearing to be charmed by the production.

Only the previous Saturday The Playhouse had offered another Broadway production, the comedy review “Too Many Sweethearts” featuring Guy Rarick, the Harmony Four, and The 3 Dancing Bugs. The ads had promised a “carload of special scenery, gorgeous gowns, and elaborate electrical effects” as well as “the classiest, singiest, danciest, prettiest chorus” of 20 fetching lovelies all for a matinee price of a quarter going up to a top price of 75 cents for the evening show. A week later The Playhouse would be offering Emmy Wehlen in “The Amateur Adventuress” described as “5 acts of exquisite comedy” along with a vaudeville show, all for 10 cents during the afternoon rising to 15 and 10 cents for the evening. On the following Wednesday, the 15th, Spaeth and Company would be at The Playhouse to present Avery Hopwood’s comedy “Fair and Warmer” which had completed a year’s run at the Elting and Harris theaters in New York and seven “capacity” months at the Cort Theater in Chicago. Matinee seats ranged from 25 to 50 cents while evening tickets could be had for 50 cents to a dollar. Perhaps some of the company were putting up at the Hotel Saint James, on the northeast corner of West and Church Streets, which along with “special attention given to commercial men and automobile patrons” offered special rates to theatrical people.” “The Homelike Hotel” offered forty rooms, which were “newly furnished, electric lighted, and steam heated.”

For the Fritz Kreisler performance the advance sale was enormous and an overflow crowd was expected. The program, announced in advance, was one designed to plumb the full depths of the audience’s emotions and display the artist’s virtuos-



The St. James Hotel on West Street near the corner of Church Street.

ity. It would be a full evening divided into three parts. The first two works would be a sonata by Tartini and a Concerto in C by Antonio Vivaldi. Following a brief intermission there would be a concerto by Viotti and then, in the third segment, would come works by Mozart and Schubert as well as the signature pieces which never failed to dazzle and excite listeners, the "Hymn to the Sun" from Rimsky-Korsakov's "Coq d'Or" as well as Kreisler's own "La Gitana" and "Tambourin Chinois." The drumbeat of advance publicity continued with a lengthy press release on 10 October describing Kreisler's early years as a "wunderkind," his youthful explorations of alternative careers such as medicine and painting, and finally his transformation into a mature artist whose love of playing was such that when on tour he was happiest performing seven nights a week.

That night not only every seat in the Playhouse was taken but the stage itself was packed. The crowd of nearly 1500 was perhaps the largest in the theater's history. "Those who doubted whether the city and its surrounding territory would properly receive and appreciate a world-famous musician must have been astounded at the size of the audience and its intelligent appreciation of the great program," said the *Herald* next morning, suggesting the event marked "something of an epoch in Rutland." The anonymous reviewer proceeded to wax most lyrical in his description of the evening's colors and textures. The music ranged from "brilliant, dashing and compelling" to "so soft and sweet that it lulled and soothed" to evocations of "the flit of the fairies and the glint of sunlight." There was the wild music of the gypsy caravans as well as the "somber, savage, almost terrible music" that sent through the audience "a thrill almost of fear." Throughout the evening there was "a brilliance of attack," "marvelous bowing and fingering," and "feeling that



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at his concert you'll surely want to hear his wonderful violin interpretations again. And you can hear them whenever you wish.

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24 Center St.



*The Kreisler music
was offered
on Victor Records
by N.M. Bradley.*

showed of what the soul of a violin is really capable." When it was over, the audience erupted into applause and demanded more. Kreisler obliged with "Caprice Viennois" and Chaminade's "Serenade Espagnole" but even then his admirers refused to let him leave the stage until he had repeated the strains of the sunny Spanish serenade a second time, a "fitting ending to an evening of supremely good music." Surprisingly, there was no further reference to the concert in future news pages, only in an ad from N.M. Bradley promising easy terms on one of his new Victrola machines which could make Kreisler's magic available anytime.



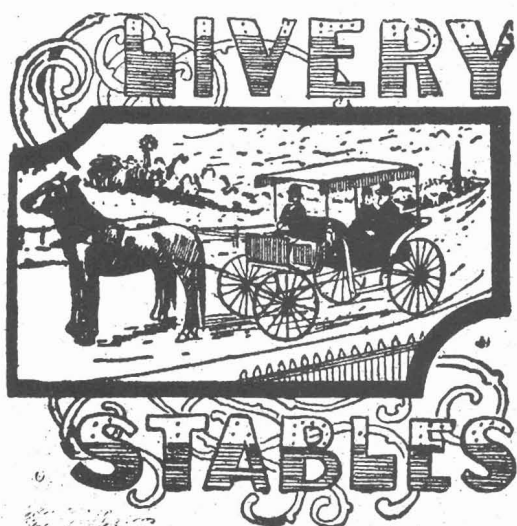
The south side of Center Street showing the Playhouse and Bradley's Store.

Of course, life in Rutland during those weeks of October 1919 was not all or even mostly appearances by world class athletes and musicians. More typically, it was represented by the comings and goings and visitations chronicled in the personals column which were no doubt more generally perused than the stories of the Babe's epic blasts or Kreisler's transcendent musicianship. For example, next to a notice that city taxes would be due or payable on 10 October one could learn that Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mintzer and family of North Main Street had returned from a visit of several days to friends in Glens Falls, New York, or that Dr. D. A. Heidel of Cottage Street, who had been ill at home with the grip, was feeling better. Isaac Miller of Charles Sterns & Co., dry goods merchants at 21-23 Merchants Row, had gone to New York City on a buying trip, while Charles Baldwin, a student at Middlebury College, and George Lee, a sophomore at the University of Vermont, had been in Rutland the previous weekend visiting their parents. Readers were also interested to know that Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Greenwood of South Main Street had picked a quart of ripe red raspberries in Clarendon Springs yesterday while visiting their daughter. Together with the equally fine raspberries presented to the *Herald* by F. H. Nichols of Brandon, they showed that excellent quality fruit was still pickable this late in the season. Meanwhile, Edward J. Kerrigan of 131 Library Avenue, was pleased by the return of his bicycle which had been stolen Sunday morning from the front of St. Peter's Church. The bike had been recovered by "Patsy" Fusco of West Street who, while going out hunting, had seen two boys with a bicycle and later on returning found it in a brush pile in Center Rutland. On Wednesday, 8 October, G.A. Bucklin of Grant Avenue had needed only a few hours at Lake Bomoseen to land four good-sized pike, the largest weighing over five pounds. The previous morning the

public had learned the details of the wedding of Miss Edna MacEarle of Shrewsbury to Arthur E. Shumway of Cottage Street, train dispatcher for the Rutland Railroad. The "Bridal Chorus" from "Lohengrin" had been played by Miss Mildred White of Belmont while the bride, gowned in dark blue, marched down the aisle. Wedding gifts included "silver, cut glass, money, linen and china, of which there was a dinner set from the groom's father."

On the business and political front, in cooperation with railroads around the country, the Rutland Railroad was mounting a safety first drive. Assistant superintendent S.S. Colton and claim agent George J. McMaster were in charge of the local committee, while stationmaster H.C. Brislin and valuation engineer Frank H. Stevens comprised the publicity committee. The goal was to reduce the number of reportable accidents incurred by railroad personnel during the two-week period between 18 and 31 October, as there had been four during that time span the previous year.

Meanwhile, the Vermont Public Service Commission at a hearing on 10 October at the Hotel Berwick, heard from General Manager F.S. Nicholson that the traction department of the Rutland Railway, Light and Power Company was operating at a loss of \$70,000 annually. The automobile, said Nicholson, was negatively impacting the revenue of electric railway lines not only in Vermont, but across the country. Many had gone into receivership or closed down completely; in many cases track lines had already been torn up. In response to complaints from the Businessmen's Association of Poultney about the frequency and quality of service to that community from Fair Haven, Nicholson expressed sympathy and promised to improve service but noted that it was presently being conducted at a car mile loss of 27 cents and "that the schedule now in force is all the traffic demands." The ascension of the automobile may have been driving out the electric railway car but it still had not supplanted the horse. At 102 Willow Street, D.A.



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RUTLAND DIRECTORY - 1919

An ad for Barker's Livery Stables from the 1919 Rutland City Directory.

Barker continued to run livery stables offering the “livery, sale and boarding of horses” as well as “funeral cars and coaches” and “heavy teaming and trucking.” At 2 Wales Street, Arsene Mercure was continuing to do business as an expert harness maker and saddler, offering to have “harness, saddles, trunks and bags repaired on short notice.”

Governor Percival Clement, a Rutlander, was busy traveling the state, speaking mainly to veterans’ groups. On 7 October he was the speaker of the day in Wilmington at exercises welcoming home that town’s war heroes. The event featured floats commemorating the wars of “ ’76, ’61, ’98 and 1918.” On 3 October he had been in Rochester addressing a similar celebration. Clement spoke briefly there of Vermont’s part in the Great War and “expressed himself as honored to look into the faces and shake the hands of the veterans of three wars,” noting that Vermont had always been at the forefront in support of her boys in uniform. Veteran fifer M.D. Whitney marked the occasion by playing the same march he had played when Vermont troops entered Vicksburg.

Of more immediate concern to residents of Rutland was a decision that was made at an aldermanic meeting on Monday night, 6 October, that would have permanent impact on the face of the city. It was voted to purchase the Stearns property at 15 West Street for \$14,000 as a site for an armory to be erected by the state. The decision had come only after months of investigation of potential sites by a joint committee headed by Stephen C. Dorsey. Initially, 20 pieces of property within the city had been offered for sale in response to an advertisement by the state. From these the state’s Board of Armory Commissioners had selected four for further investigation, these being the Sycamore Inn on South Main Street; the Stearns property; the lot at the corner of West and Cottage Streets, and a combination of the Royce and Temple lots on Grove Street. The committee initially felt the armory should be combined with a convention hall and debated whether it should be located “on the hill” or downtown. The consensus was in favor of a lot in the business district provided it could be obtained at a reasonable price. Options were then obtained on all four properties. The committee’s first choice was the so-called Edgar B. Moore lot on West and Cottage Streets, but a neighboring lot was needed to achieve the area the state wanted and it was found that \$35,000 would be required to assemble the whole parcel, \$20,000 in excess of the \$15,000 the city had appropriated for land acquisition. Cost proved to be a similar stumbling block with the committee’s next choice, the Royce/Temple property. Realizing that a suitable site within the business district would not be obtainable within the allotted funds, the committee now considered the Sycamore Inn, finding there advantages of location on a main thoroughfare and a streetcar route. However, the ample size of the Stearns lot, with its frontage of 150 feet and depth of 369 feet, offering space for a possible drill ground or other city building in the rear, together with its modest price, tipped the balance. It was also noted that the property contained “considerable salvage” the sale of which could reduce the city’s outlay even further. In retrospect, that night’s decision was a wise one,

providing a suitable and dignified site opposite the grounds of the city park where local militiamen were said to have drilled during the Revolution. At the same time it preserved the architectural integrity of a key block of 18th and 19th Century homes on South Main Street. Succeeding generations owe a debt of gratitude to Dorsey and committee members J. C. Temple, L. J. Trudel, Stephen Cragin, John C. White, L.J. Egleston, James A. Lillis, C.H. Landon, and Dr. James M. Hamilton.

In other business that night, the aldermen tabled a request from a representative of the Business Men's Association to support a much-needed public restroom downtown for the benefit of shoppers. The representative noted that there was a store in the Bardwell Hotel that could be rented for such a purpose for \$50 a month and that the businessmen's group together with the Women's Club would be pleased to maintain the facility. Two or three aldermen viewed the matter sympathetically but the objection was raised that the city could not legally appropriate money for such a project. Also coming before the board that evening was a petition from the Rutland Hotel Association seeking approval to repair the stables behind the Bardwell. This too was objected to by some members who asserted that as this was city property before anything was done the city building inspector should inspect the premises and determine just what repairs were needed.

Such is a snapshot of life in Rutland during the first two weeks of October 1919, a time both exciting and prosaic, a time when Rutlanders bought their "foot fashioned spats" at Clauson's Shoes, their hunting goods at Howley Brothers, their fashionable ladies' undergarments at the Ross-Huntress Company, their "fresh lean hamburger" at 22 cents a pound at the Ladabouche Market, their "mechanics soap paste" from the F.E.D. Farmer and Company prescription store, their "new and correct styles" in men's, women's and children's apparel from the Surprise Department Store, and their army blankets, flour, and fresh pork products from the Combination Cash Store. It was a time when Dr. Butterfield, working from his office in the Chaffee Building at 24 ½ Center Street, provided dental services "at prices within reach of everyone," to wit, gold fillings \$1.00 and up; silver fillings 75 cents and up; porcelain crowns for \$5.00; gold crowns for \$5.00 and up; extractions for 50 cents, not to mention low prices on plate work.

Sometimes, on what may seem another humdrum day in a city where changes come but don't come very rapidly, it helps to recall a time when the stirring strains of Kreisler's violin wafted out onto Center Street on a fall night, while down at the fairgrounds on a Sunday afternoon a mighty crack of the bat was heard as the Babe lifted one out of the outfielder's sight to a place where old-timers had never seen a ball go before.

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